



## ***THE SPOKES SPEAK - GEARED TO SERVICE***

### **Rotary Club of the North Fork Valley**

POB 1543, Paonia, CO 81428

WEB SITES: [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org) [www.rotary5470.org](http://www.rotary5470.org) [www.paoniarotary.org](http://www.paoniarotary.org)

Meeting Thursdays at Noon in the Paonia Town Hall

District 5470

Club 1180 - Chartered 12/20/22

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(Newsletter Guest-edited by Bain Weinberger)

**LAST MEETING: June 6, 2019**

President Heck Presided.

Key Guest: No key guest today (Ed Bliss has key).

Glenn introduced guest Kaya Crawford who will be going to RYLA this year. She will be a sophomore next year.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Next Thursday (6/13), NFV Rotary will be providing breakfast in the park for Rural Philanthropy Days.
- Ulli would like to create a Mining Museum in Paonia. This will require forming a foundation and raising money. He is presently forming a committee, so let Ulli know if you are interested.
- A memorial service for Kate will be held June 29<sup>th</sup> from 3-6 PM at the Blue Sage.

#### **Program: West Nile Virus**

Kevin Parks (another West Nile survivor) introduced recent West Nile Virus survivor John VanDenBerg and Garrett Parker, head of the North Fork Mosquito Abatement District.

John began by explaining that he contracted West Nile Virus in September of 2018 (a week after Ed Marston died of the disease). He himself almost died his first night in the hospital. It took several days for the doctors to confirm his diagnosis, as it takes about 5 days for enough antibodies to be created to show up in a blood test.

The effects of the virus were very serious. He contracted encephalitis, which paralyzed his arms and legs. He was in the hospital for several days, and then in a nursing home for 3-4 months. He could not read or write, and had to re-learn how to use Microsoft Word. He has just recently started driving again (watch out for a blue GMC pickup!). It was estimated that the encephalitis cost John 30 IQ points.

He said he made a lot of mistakes that contributed to his contracting the disease. For example, as an avid bird lover, he had set up numerous feeders that attracted an entire flock of Redwing Blackbirds to his house. Birds are a primary carrier of West Nile. The mosquitos bite the birds, which passes the virus to them. Then the mosquitos bite humans, and pass the virus along. He was also not careful enough about managing standing water on his property. His old, open ditches turned out to be a great breeding ground for mosquitoes. They can breed in a little as a bottle-cap of water. He had also been reluctant to use a repellent with DEET, using less effective herbal alternatives. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), lemon eucalyptus oil is OK,

but must be reapplied frequently. John now uses a repellent with 30% DEET, and wears a long sleeve shirt. It is not clear at this point whether an individual can contract West Nile more than once.

So how to raise awareness in the general population about the seriousness of West Nile Virus? The biggest current need is for accurate data. The Delta County Health Department knew of only five severe cases, but John quickly found 13 more serious cases. The County's data is flawed because it only looks at the City of Delta, omitting cases in the rest of the county.

John formed an informal group of "survivors" (along with spouses and others). They have been working with the Health Dept. and the Mosquito District to improve reporting and to help get the word out about the prevalence and seriousness of West Nile in Delta County by providing education and speakers. They are also working to improve data reporting. John is now part of a national network of survivors.

While there are 1,700 West Nile survivors in the U.S., physicians often don't know what West Nile is or how to treat it. There is no West Nile vaccine for humans, although there is for horses. About 1/3 of the horses who contract West Nile die (so get your horses vaccinated!). The CDC contends that there are not enough victims of the virus to justify developing a vaccine. The disease is most serious in young children with weak autoimmune system, and the elderly. But people of any age can be affected.

As for prevention, controlling the mosquito population is imperative. The Culex mosquito (the only species that carries West Nile Virus) can travel 1-10 miles per day, even with no wind. They are generally active from late July to September. Dusk and dawn are their most active times of day. Climate change is exacerbating the problem by increasing the range and activity of the Culex mosquito. The Mosquito Abatement District publishes trap-counts throughout their 50 square mile area on their web site ([www.NFMAD.org](http://www.NFMAD.org)). Free site evaluation is available to every resident of the District.

As a rule of thumb, if water is stagnant and warm, it will breed mosquitoes. Ponds are not usually a problem. They tend to be too cold, and wind ripples disrupt the eggs and larvae. Ponds should be kept free of cattails, though, and animal hoofprints around ponds can trap water and breed mosquitoes. Larvicides are available to homeowners at local stores such as Farm and Home.

The river corridor is considered a "hotspot" for mosquitoes, and a lot of treatment is focused there. The Crawford Reservoir is also a great breeding ground for Culex mosquitoes, and Paonia is easily within the mosquitoes' range. However, there is no mosquito district in Crawford. The North Fork mosquito district is trying to help Crawford with mosquito control, but can only do so much as the District is "severely underfunded". There needs to be increased funding from the County Commissioners as well as a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mosquito District serving Crawford and Redlands Mesa.

[Thanks to Sarah Bishop for note-taking assistance – errors and omissions are mine -- Ed.]

## UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Date	Speaker	Program	Member
6/13/2019		no meeting (RPD breakfast)	
6/20/2019		RYLA Students	Glenn Dahlgren
6/27/2019		Induction of new President and BOD	
7/4/2019		no meeting	
7/11/2019			James Schott
7/18/2019			Peggy Szvetecz
7/25/2019			District Governor
8/1/2019			Bain Weinberger

8/8/2019		Felix Belmont
8/15/2019		Bill Bishop
8/22/2019		Sarah Bishop
8/29/2019	Fifth Thursday	
9/5/2019		Ed Bliss
9/12/2019		Pam Bliss
9/19/2019		Randy Campbell
9/26/2019		John Coombe
10/3/2019	Business meeting	
10/10/2019		Glenn Dahlgren
10/17/2019		Marsha Grant
10/24/2019		Barb Heck
10/31/2019		Fifth Thursday
11/7/2019		Mike Heck
11/14/2019		Ulli Lange
11/21/2019		Bob Lario
11/28/2019	no meeting	
12/5/2019		Betsy Marston
12/12/2019		Jackie Parks
12/19/2019		Kevin Parks
1/2/2019		Karri Polson

